

**Montana Historical Society  
Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting  
July 15, 2021, 9:00 MST  
Montana State Capitol Building, Room 137**

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Hal Stearns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Jodel Fohn took roll call.

**Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees members present:** Norma Ashby Smith, Carol Donaldson, Tim Fox, Ed Jasmin, Bill Jones, Kent Kleinkopf, Lorna Kuney, Thomas Minckler, Ken Robison, Jay Russell, and Hal Stearns.

**Excused Board Members:** Jestin Dupree, Steve Lozar, Douglas MacDonald, and Jude Sheppard.

**MHS Staff Present:** Molly Kruckenberg, Director; Denise King, Administrator; Eve Byron, Public Information Officer; Ginny Sullivan, Development Officer; Jodel Fohn, Membership Services; Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer; Roberta Gebhardt, Research Center Program Manager; Jennifer Bottomly-O'looney, Museum Program Manager; Diana Di Stefano, Publications Manager; and Kirby Lambert, Outreach and Interpretation Program Manager.

**Installation Of Officers**

At the Board of Trustees meeting on April 15, 2021, the Executive Committee was elected. Hal Stearns was elected President. Jude Sheppard was elected Vice President. Steve Lozar was elected Secretary. Ed Jasmin and Tim Fox were elected as Members at Large. Kent Kleinkopf is the immediate past President.

**Introduction of New Board of Trustees Members**

President Stearns introduced Jay Russell, Carol Donaldson, and Lorna Kuney. Each Board Member briefly introduced themselves. President Stearns then thanked Bob Brown, Crystal Wong Shors, and Tom Nygard for their dedication and service on the Board.

**Review Of Minutes**

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2021, meeting. Kent Kleinkopf seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT – Hal Stearns**

President Stearns spoke about the importance of being an MHS members and encouraged Trustees to be a member. He reported that MHS has a new 4<sup>th</sup> grade history book in development and work continues on the Montana Heritage Center. President Stearns spoke about the Employee Appreciation Picnic and thanked all involved in the planning. MHS Bylaws outline subcommittee for Trustees. A survey to gage committee interest will be sent out to all Trustees.

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Molly Kruckenberg**

Molly welcomed the new Board of Trustee members and thanked the previous Board members for their years of service. Molly thanked all who contributed and attended the employee appreciation picnic last night.

**New Employee Introductions** - New employees Katelyn Peat, Security and Guest Services, and Monica Lathum, Accounting Technician, were introduced. Museum interns, Elizabeth Wright, Ashley Wade, and Caitlynn Gaston were introduced.

Molly shared the quarterly core statistics report. She provided an update on Covid-19 impacts. The Governor required that 50% of state employees return to work on-site by July 15, MHS has already exceeded that goal. With the Governor lifting the Covid-19 Emergency Declaration, the Research Center is open and tours are beginning again at the Original Governor's Mansion. We are still providing hand sanitizer and encouraging social distancing. It is great to see people back in the building.

Molly spoke briefly about the construction of the Montana Heritage Center. There were on site meetings with Main Street Design in June and July. We are looking to partner with the Montana State Library to create a sensory garden. We are also exploring options with the Montana Arts Council to incorporate the statutorily mandated American Indian Monument into the design..

We are continuing work on Strategic Planning, holding meetings with each program to review draft mission, vision, values, and overarching goals. This quarter MHS received \$77,812 in cash gifts for the Montana Heritage Center and \$66,505 for other projects and programs. We have received a \$500,000 grant from the Murdock Trust, a \$100,000 pledge from Stockman Bank, and a \$10,000 pledge from the Montana Independent Bankers. We have raised \$6.2 million dollars towards our goal of \$10 million for the Montana Heritage Center.

Molly participated in several outreach opportunities this past quarter. She served on the USS Montana Committee, met with the Greater Montana Foundation Committee, was interviewed on Voices of Montana with Tim Fox, . gave a tour of the Scriver Center to the Montana History Foundation Board with Jennifer Bottomly-O'looney. She also provided an interview for the KOA (Kampgrounds of America). The History Conference will be in Butte on September 23-25 and is themed "A Blast from the Past."

Ginny Sullivan, Development Officer, introduced herself and talked about sustainable giving, our annual appeals, fundraising for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade textbook, and the capitol campaign. She reviewed our current gift chart and discussed the public campaign, "brick" campaign, and naming opportunities.

Eve Byron, Public Information Officer, spoke about her responsibilities at the MHS, including press releases and website updates. She discussed the montanamuseum.org site, pointing out the live feed of the construction site. Eve shared public relations and social media statistics. Eve has been working with various Tourism agencies to promote visitation.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Russ Katherman from the Department of Administration's Architecture and Engineering, Jennifer James from James Consulting, Martin Byrnes from Cushing Terrell, and Tevere MacFadyen from Main Street Design gave an update on the Montana Heritage Center project. Russ spoke about energy savings conservation measure for the building.

Jennifer James spoke about the collaborative team working on the project. She discussed community outreach, statewide outreach with other agencies, Tribal Outreach, Stakeholder Groups, the Website, Disability Rights Groups, neighbors, and the City of Helena.

Marty Byrnes shared a design update. The construction drawings are complete and the bid documents have gone out. Cushing Terrell is leading a value engineering exercise to keep the work within the budget. The rammed aggregate piers have been completed, bids were accepted June 15, and the structural/concrete work will move forward this fall.

Russ Katherman explained the elevated costs and what their goals are to maintain the quality of the building and remain within the budget.

Tevere MacFadyn shared an update on interpretive planning. Main Street Design traveled to Montana for and in person meetings with MHS and Tribal Stakeholders. They are working to understand the scope and cost for audio visual elements. Main Street is refining content for the Homeland Gallery and commons areas. The coordination of design elements for the Russell Gallery and Changing Galleries are ongoing.

Molly reviewed the timeline for building project. The process started in 2005 with bonding authority, although planning conversations started a few years before that. There were lots of years of hard work by Bruce Whittenberg and Denise King and others to make sure that we are at the place we are today.

The video rendering of the Montana Heritage Center was shown. The video is on the project website.

### **PROGRAM REPORTS**

Roberta Gebhardt, Research Center Program Manager, introduced herself and gave an overview the Research Center. In the last quarter, the Research Center has worked with the People's Center in Polson through the SHRAB's student archivist program. Intern Sierra Ross is assisting onsite with their needs after a devastating fire. The Libby Heritage will be hosting the SHRAB's fall Archives Blitz to process collections. A new Government Records Archivist will be hired this summer. With C&A grant funding, a selection of Haynes glass negatives are going to be digitized to coordinate with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Yellowstone National Park. The Research Center has gone from requiring appointments for research to a reservation system with walk in service available. The Montana newspaper projects will be on hiatus due to staffing issues. The deaccession list was explained and discussed.

Kent Klienkopf moved to approve the Deaccession List. Ken Robison seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Jennifer Bottomly-O'looney, Museum Program Manager, introduced herself and gave an overview of the Museum Program. She presented a loan request from the Great Falls History Museum for an exhibit on the Spirits of Cascade County.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the loan to the Great Falls History Museum. Norma Ashby Smith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Kirby Lambert, Outreach & Interpretation Program Manager, introduced himself and gave an overview of the Outreach & Interpretation Program. The Original Governor's Mansion has reopened with Anthony Schrillo as our tour guide. The footlockers are prepared to be sent to schools in the fall. Public programs will be restarting this September, on Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. The 2021 History Conference will be in

Butte, September 23-25. The Farm and Ranch 10-yearbook is in the works. A new 4<sup>th</sup> grade history textbook e *Montana, the History of our Home* is nearing completion. The 2022 History Conference will be in West Yellowstone to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the park.

Diana Di Stefano, Publications Program Manager, provided an overview about the Publication Program. This is the 70<sup>th</sup> Consecutive year of the publication of the *Montana the Magazine of Western History*. This was the third year for the Emerging Scholar Article Contest. The winter issue of the magazine will be about women's activism. In Press news, *A History of Montana in 101 Objects* will arrive this summer. There will be a book release party on August 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The next book slated for publication is a biography of Rose Gordon. Subscribers to the magazines are over 3,000.

Pete Brown, State Historic Preservation Officer, gave an overview of the SHPO program. Pete spoke about the Revitalizing Montana's Rural Heritage grant project, the African American Heritage Resources project to develop a documentary on the African American experience in Montana, the one room schoolhouse survey, and a field trip to Beavertown for archaeological field work. SHPO is partnering with FWP to analyze artifacts from Bannack. SHPO is revising their 5-year plan that will set the course for preservation efforts across the state.

Denise King, Administrator for the Central Services Division, introduced herself and gave an overview of Central Services. Denise asked all Board Members to please sign their travel voucher and turn in their hotel receipts. Denise discussed the most recent audit and that 3 of the last 5 years MHS has had a clean audit. The county-by-county services report was shared.

Ed Jasmin moved to approve the hiring of the Katelyn Peak, Guest Services and Monica Latham, Accounting Tech. Kent Kleinkopf seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Denise spoke about the history of House Bill 338, the Montana Museums Act of 2020.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Gene and Bev Allen have approached the MHS about acquiring their L.A. Huffman collection. MHS has some of the Huffman Collection. After discussion, the topic was tabled.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Norma Ashby Smith shared a handout on the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Waking the Dead Tour in Great Falls.

It was moved by Ed Jasmin to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Kent Kleinkopf. Motion passed unanimously.



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Hal Stearns, President